

Submitted July 25, 2012
Approved as of
Date July 25, 2012

**MINUTES OF THE ROCKVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING NO. 11-2012
Wednesday, May 9, 2012**

The City of Rockville Planning Commission convened in regular session in the Mayor and Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 9, 2012.

PRESENT

Dion Trahan, Chair Pro Tem
John Tyner
Jerry Callistein
Don Hadley
Kate Ostell

Absent: David Hill, Chair

Present: Andrew Gunning, Assistant Director, CPDS
Marcy Waxman, Assistant City Attorney
Jim Wasilak, Chief of Planning
Deane Mellander, Zoning Administrator
David Levy, Chief of Long Range Planning

I. PRESENTATION

Eileen Bernstein, Chair of the Citizens Implementation Committee, delivered a presentation regarding their recent report and recommendations to the Rockville Mayor and Council. She stated that the CIC saw the need for dispute resolution in the development review process and would like to find ways to engage citizens as active stakeholders in six key planning initiatives listed below:

1. Provide regular interim progress reports,
2. Provide concise and understandable Master Plan/Development Review brochures,
3. Encourage small area plan development by neighborhood advisory committees, and large area plan development supported by consultants,
4. Resize planning areas to acknowledge locality-specific issues,
5. Return to publishing Rockville Reports on a monthly basis, and
6. Display pending projects by neighborhood on the City's website.

II. COMMISSION ACTION ITEMS

Zoning Text Amendment TXT2012-00232, to amend the sign regulations (Article 18 of the Zoning Ordinance) to allow off-premises signs and roof-top signs in certain Planned

Development zones. Deane Mellander presented his staff report.

Barbara Sears with Linowes and Blocher representing the applicant, made a few comments and then introduced John Pezzulla and Rick Cataffa of Federal Realty Trust, who discussed Phase II improvements to Rockville Town Square, which will include new green spaces and landscaping. They also expressed the need for more visible signage for Town Center merchants along 355 by working rooftop signs into existing architecture as well as on-premise sandwich signs.

The Public Hearing was opened and the following speakers addressed the Commission:

1. Linda Bozzonetti, Crawford Drive in Twinbrook, is a member of the City of Rockville Sign Review Board but spoke as a concerned citizen, stated that the Sign Review Board met with the applicant in August 2011 and some of the proposed signage currently discussed was not included in the applicant's initial package. She stated that in August there were 21 signs reviewed but only 15 are being presented now. Ms. Bozzonetti stated that she is not sure if the applicants know what they want and that all offsite signs were rejected by SRB.
2. Ruth Hanessian of 303 Highland Avenue is a member of the City of Rockville Sign Review Board but spoke as a citizen. She stated the small businesses in Town Center don't get proper exposure on Route 355 and that garage signage should be all-inclusive. Ms. Hanessian also expressed concern over the safety of rooftop signage and feels that the current signage in place is sufficient.

Commissioner Ostell moved, seconded by Commissioner Callistein, to not recommend the text amendment as a whole to Mayor and Council, but rather that the City review the sign ordinance citywide. The entire ordinance should be examined out of fairness to all merchants throughout the City and this should be a high priority. The motion passed on a 4-1 vote (Commissioner Tyner voted No and Commissioner Hill was absent).

III. COMMISSION ITEMS

- A. Staff Liaison Report - Mr. Gunning provided an update on the next Commission Meeting.
- B. Old Business - None
- C. New Business - Commissioner Trahan reported that Commissioner Kathleen Cook resigned and a vacancy notice was announced.
- D. Minutes
 1. Commissioner Tyner moved, seconded by Commissioner Ostell to approve the September 21, 2011 meeting minutes. The motion passed 5-0.
 2. Commissioner Callistein moved, seconded by Commissioner Ostell to approve the October 12, 2011 meeting minutes. The motion passed 5-0.
 3. Commissioner Hadley moved, seconded by Commissioner Callistein to approve the December 14, 2011 meeting minutes. The motion passed 5-0.

IV. FYI Correspondence - None

V. ADJOURN

There being no further business Commissioner Callistein moved, seconded by Commissioner Ostell, to adjourn the meeting at 10:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra Y. Driver, Commission Secretary